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TEAM TEACHING AT THE COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN UTAH.

BY- MYERS, KENT E. AND OTHERS
COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN UTAH, CEDAR CITY

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AN INFORMAL TRIAL AND EVALUATION OF TEAM TEACHING WAS CARRIED OUT IN EACH OF THREE COLLEGE COURSES FOR TEACHERS. THE POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES OF TEAM TEACHING WERE JUDGED TO BE--(1) MORE EFFECIIVE COVERAGE OF MORE MATERIAL, (2) MORE EFFICIENT USE OF THE TEACHER'S TIME, (3) GREATER MOTIVATION AND STUDENT INTEREST, (4) GREATER OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENT EXPLORATION WITH THE TEACHER OF INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS AND ASSIGNMENTS, AND (5) UPGRADED TEACHING RESULTING FROM INTERTEAM CRITIQUES OF MEMBERS' TEACHING. THE MAJOR DANGER SIGNS WERE--(1) OCCASIONAL POOR RAPPORT AMONG TEAM MEMBERS, (2) A TENDENCY TO "LET GEORGE DO IT," (3) OCCASIONAL DISAGREEMENT ON EXAMINATION CONTENT, (4) PROBLEMS WITH FACULTY LOAD. OF THESE, FACULTY LOAD WAS THE MAJOR PROBLEM, WHICH, IF SOLVED, COULD PERMIT TEAM TEACHING TO BE USED TO GREATER ADVANTAGE. (RF)

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TEAM TEACHING AT THE COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN UTAH
Education Division

Reported by Kent E. Myers, Morris A. Shirts,
Paul Vorkink, and others

Learning of the successes of "Team Teaching" in the public schools, the Education Division Staff of the College of Southern Utah decided in November 1964 to experiment with it on an informal basis to determine if it had any desirable advantages in improving college instruction and reducing teaching loads. This experiment was not a "research" experiment in the usual sense of the word as there was no attempt to measure student progress under this system as compared to regular methods of instruction. No funds were set aside to finance it and no one in particular was designated as the "researcher." This was simply an attempt to get a subjective evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of "Team Teaching" as we understood it. Two courses were selected to begin with as the scheduling of them made it convenient. Later a third course, "Psychological Foundations for Teachers" was added because of the nature of the material and the qualification of the staff members who were to teach it.

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COURSES AND PROCEDURE INVOLVED

Education 102 "The American School System" This is a class open to Juniors and Seniors designed to acquaint them with the philosophy and operation of the American school education in general and the Utah school system in particular. Dr. Paul Vorkink and Dr. Morris A. Shirts each had a section of this class scheduled in consecutive class periods and the course content was so organized so as to permit each of them to teach in the area of their strength. As can be seen from the attached

course outline, each professor taught the same material to each section of the class....teaching in his strength and reducing the amount of time spent in preparing class material.

Variations on this "dual assignment" approach were made during the school year and the beginning of the next school year it was organized under a single professor who had both sections of the class but who worked cooperatively with the other professors in the presentation of the material.

Education 50 "Introduction to Education" This class is a class for Freshmen and is a pre-requisite course for other Education courses. Two sections of the class were scheduled con-currently, each with an instructor...Dr. Kent E. Myers and Dr. Paul Vorkink. This course is actually part of the "Selective Admissions Program" for Teacher Education. The course is exploratory in nature but it is also diagnostic. A sincere attempt is made to help the student discover his weaknesses as a freshman in order that he might have optimum opportunity to correct them before applying to enter the Teacher Education Program. The two sections of the course were combined in one large room most of the time to hear guest lecturers from the public schools and for other class instruction. Each professor prepared materials for presentation in the area of his strength but joint presentations were used most effectively. Near the end of the course, interviews were held with each student by the professors for evaluative and counseling purposes.

Psychology 107 "Psychological Foundations for Teachers" This is one of the basic professional sequence courses available only to those students

who have been admitted to the Teacher Education Program. It is a "fused" class in the sense that it is the result of combining Educational Psychology and Child Growth and Development into a single class. Two professors, Dr. McRay Cloward, and Professor Vern Kupfer, taught the class. Each was strong in his own field. Each contributed to the class preparation and presentation. Presentations were made individually or jointly, depending upon the need and the circumstances. Both were present in the class as a "team" most of the time.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In January 1966, at the conclusion of the Winter Quarter, members of the various "teams" submitted their observations of the program. It must be re-emphasized again that these were not objective in nature. We were not interested in proving or disproving anything. We were simply interested in attempting to satisfy our curiousity about "Team Teaching" on the college level and what implications it had for us personally. As a result of this "experiment" we feel that we know more about the strengths and weaknesses of the idea and that we need to re-tool our instructional approaches accordingly. A brief summary of our conclusions are listed below which should be helpful to us and others in future attempts at "Team Teaching."

SOME SIGNS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

1. <u>More course material can be covered more effectively</u>. Individual members of the team are very highly skilled in their own areas of specialization and can be quite thorough in their presentations. In

a typical classroom situation the instructor will be quite penetrating in the area of his specialization and tend to "skimp" over the other areas. In "Team Teaching" all areas can be penetrated quite deeply.

2. More efficient use of the teacher's time is possible. A teacher can teach in his own area of specialization. He prepares and presents the material from a position of strength from his wide background of experience. He does this with relatively less effort than if he had to prepare and present material with which he was not quite so familiar.
3. Greater motivation and student interest are possible. A wider variety of rich experience is brought into the classroom; changes of pace are more frequent; the contrast between philosophies, personalities and approaches to the teaching act have a tendency to add more "leavening" to the activities of the classroom.
4. Students have a greater opportunity to explore individual problems and assignments with the teacher. With two instructors in the class, students are able to get more immediate and satisfying answers to questions and help on individual problems than is possible with a single instructor.
5. Teaching is up-graded. Each member of the team feels it important to teach at his very best level of competence. This is especially true in cases where both teachers are present in the classroom at all times. Also, in cases where a high degree of rapport has developed between members of the team, professional critiques of the presentations of each team member helps to improve the quality of the teaching.

SOME DANGER SIGNS

1. Rapport between team members may not develop positively. The teacher may not feel free to fully assert his own individual philosophy and to create his own identity. Un-resolved, divergent and hostile points of view may develop. Of course when these feelings develop, the effectiveness of the "team" is almost nil.

2. Individual members of the "Team" may have a tendency to relax and "let George do it." Under all the pressures of time and deadlines most professors feel these days, it is apparent that this development is a distinct possibility. An appointment with the President, or a State Committee assignment can more easily be met if the other member of the "Team" could take over the class for that particular day or week. Although it is a recognized danger and everyone vows not to do it, when these conflicts develop, "team teaching" provides a ready-made excuse.

3. In the Preparation of tests and other evaluations of class and student progress, undesirable results develop. Team members may not agree on the content nor type of examination to be given. If these problems are not worked out well in advance, the Final Examination may be a "humdinger." In fact, one team member might not even know the answers to half of the examination himself! When and if the examination is returned to the class, some unexpected fire-works develop.

4. Identification of faculty loads. Strange as it may seem, this, more than any other factor is the most discouraging aspect of team teaching. Present practices of reporting do not reflect the true picture of credit-hour loads of faculty members working in team teaching

situations. The formula for calculating faculty loads does not provide for team teaching. This becomes a significant factor when comparisons are made by the staff, administrative officers, the Board of Trustees, the Coordinating Council on Higher Education or the State Legislature. It becomes especially acute when salaries, additional staff members and appropriations are involved.

SUMMARY

We believe the results of the informal and subjective experiment warrant further consideration. We have convinced ourselves that "Team Teaching" on the college level has many distinct advantages, and after having had experience with it in different situations, we are better prepared to cope with some of its' disadvantages. We are still working with it and feel that if the problem of proper identification of faculty loads could be resolved, we could use it to a greater advantage.

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